

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the telephone interview on October 15. During that interview, it was agreed that this RCE and accompanying Amendment C would be filed.

The previous claims 13-18 and 20-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Shimomura in view of Sadler.

New claim 27 distinguishes at least by reciting querying the individual modules in a sequence opposite to that of a printable media transport direction where said querying includes testing a first module by transmitting a command to correct the error, said command including instructing the first module to move the printable media in the media transport direction in order to clear the first module. Claim 27 later recites testing the further modules preceding the first module and clearing those modules if necessary. The Examiner agreed in the final Office Action at page 5 that the primary reference Shimomura does not teach testing the modules in a direction opposite to a media flow path. However the Examiner concludes that it would be obvious since there would be no advantage for such reverse testing.

As shown at Step S4 in Fig. 2, the last module receives a command to clear the paper path first. Thus, any “stuck” media in this last module are cleared. Then when the preceding module is tested, if necessary “stuck” media in this preceding module can be cleared. Since the last module was already cleared, papers can now pass through the last module and be cleared for the preceding module. This would not be possible if one did not start with

the last module (most downstream module) since if the upstream module was first cleared, for example, but the downstream module was not yet cleared, media papers from that first upstream module could not be cleared since they could be blocked by papers “stuck” in the downstream module.

The clearing is necessary before the printer or copier unit as a whole can be operated again.

Although the secondary reference Shimomura discusses at the end of column 5 and the first six lines of column 6 sequence testing, there is no disclosure of testing in a direction opposite the media flow direction in sequence *and does not teach the clearing of the modules* as recited in claim 27.

During the telephone interview, the Examiner observed that testing of all modules would have to occur before media flow could occur and thus sequence did not matter. However, *this is not true for the clearing operation before the machine is ready for continuing normal operation*. First the papers must be cleared from the modules and the “clearing” operations are performed in the sequence opposite to the media transport direction. This has the clear advantage described above so that by clearing the papers in the most downstream module, clearing of earlier modules is not obstructed, which would be the case if testing and clearing was done in the direction of the media transport.

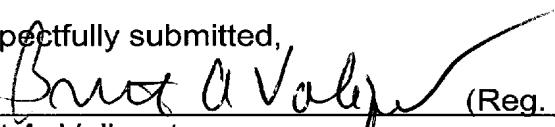
Dependent claims 28-34 distinguish at least for the reasons noted with respect to claim 27 and also by reciting additional features not suggested.

Device claim 35 is somewhat similar to claim 27 and distinguishes in the manner noted with respect to claim 27.

Allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or to credit any overpayment to account no. 501519.

Respectfully submitted,


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